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## A Complete Q&A on Business Blogging

By Roy G. Miller

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### What is blogging for business?

Blogging for business is a marketing communications activity that uses the Internet and all the Web 2.0 technologies to advance your message.

### Why should we blog?

- It provides a platform for narrative discussion—and is often perceived as less rehearsed, massaged and corporately approved
- It allows you to more frequently “touch” key audiences since a blog depends on timely, frequent content updates.
- It can instantly alert interested readers of new information and updates, thanks to RSS feeds (basically a Subscribe option)
- It serves as a “personality platform”—an extension of your corporate or personal branding.
- It invites comments and feedback from readers
- It complements your overall communications
- It helps build relationships, loyalty and like-ability.
- It serves as a supporting sales tool.

One marketing blogger says this: *“If a company wants to build valuable relationships, engage with their customers, extend their reach, become more findable and improve their bottom*



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*line in the process (and in this order) - they will probably find value in blogging.”*

But it's NOT for everybody. Another blogger divides blogs into types. Check out his perspective at

<http://www.corporateblogging.info/2004/08/six-types-of-business-blogs.asp>

### Who reads blogs?

Forrester Research, in one report states that 24 percent of Gen Yers read blogs, which is twice as often as the 12 percent of Gen Xers (ages 27-40) and three times the 7 percent of Young

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Boomers (ages 41-50) that read blogs. So skeptics of blogs should suspend their disbelief and look to at least one bellweather demographic to get an idea of how widespread blog readership can potentially grow in the future.

According to Debbie Weil (<http://www.debbieweil.com>), an international blogging and social media expert for corporations, 9.2 percent of Fortune 500s are blogging. Weil says, "Your customers or constituencies expect to be heard. They want to be listened to and they want you to talk back with corporate-speak stripped out. A blog is one of the most powerful ways to monitor the chatter about your brand, bring it back to your own turf and shape the discussion. Not control it per se. But demonstrate that you know people are talking and you have something useful to add."

### **I've got a Web site. Why do I need a blog?**

A blog is more narrative and delivers timely content to readers. A blog often complements a corporate Web site, which may be more static and focus on key messages, products, services and corporate information. A blog is often less "corporate" and perceived as less filtered.

### **What's it take for me to blog?**

Follow these 4 Ps:

#### **Purpose**

All corporate activities must focus on business goals. Will a blog help you

accomplish specific goals? Align your blog with your business. Define its purpose.

#### **Priority**

A blog requires priority, and must have a top-level commitment to offer timely, consistent communications and content. A blog requires planning, brainstorming, writing and editing. Plan out the content, the subject matter experts who may contribute, how it gets written and edited. And when it can get posted. Priority is paramount.

#### **Process**

Once you have a purpose and commitment to do it, create and adhere to a blog posting process. Like any communications piece—a newsletter, postcard, news release, Web site or intranet—you need to identify your key messages, create an editorial calendar and map out a production schedule that includes specific deadlines for writing and editing, and any necessary approvals. Prepare your process.

#### **Personality**

IBM. EDS. Southwest Airlines. They all exude specific personalities. That personality exudes through a well-orchestrated instruments such as like colors, fonts, pictures, illustrations, page layout/design, and words. Your written words and sentences will express your personality and tone. Make sure all the pieces work together to exemplify the personality you want.

### What's it cost to blog?

Costs vary. You can go to <http://www.blogger.com> and get started for free. Companies may spend \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$20,000 a year on creating and producing a quality blog, depending on the tools, design, graphics and copy writing services.

### How do I get started blogging?

I thought you'd never ask. Your next steps:

1. Discover **BYOB<sup>2</sup>—Build Your Own Blog for Business™** at [www.rgmcomms.com/byob2.html](http://www.rgmcomms.com/byob2.html)
2. Schedule an introductory session with RGM. Send an e-mail to [byob2@rgmcomms.com](mailto:byob2@rgmcomms.com)
3. **Read, learn, enjoy!** Here's a great reading list about blogging and social media, courtesy of Debbie Weil:

***Meatball Sundae*** by Seth Godin

***Naked Conversations*** by Robert Scoble and Shel Israel

***Now Is Gone*** by Geoff Livingston with Brian Solis

***The Corporate Blogging Book***  
by Debbie Weil

***The New Influencers*** by Paul Gillin

***The New Rules of Marketing and PR*** by David Meerman Scott

### About RGM Communications

RGM Communications is a public relations and marketing services firm in Wylie, Texas, a north Dallas suburb. The company offers "business communications for the real world," a no-nonsense, practical approach that helps small and mid-sized businesses communicate clearly, consistently and professionally.

### About Roy G. Miller

Roy G. Miller is president of RGM Communications, based in Wylie, Texas, a north Dallas suburb. Miller is a 20-year communications veteran who has served large, publicly held companies, international firms, small businesses and "solo-preneurs." He's worked as a freelancer, account supervisor and vice president, both on the agency and company sides of marketing communications, and also served as a newspaper reporter and writer. His forte: strong writing tightly packaged around a journalistic nose for news and a communications-business sense of "the bigger picture." He believes business communications must complement a company's efforts to reach real business objectives and success. RGM is about Business Communications for the Real World™.



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